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SACRAMENTO - SAN JOAQUIN

DELTA CONSERVANCY

A California State Agency

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**Request for *approval* to enter into a contract to receive funds from the Department of Water Resources in the amount of \$1,000,000, and subsequently enter into contract with Solano Resources Conservation District and Sonoma Ecology Center to support the first phase of the Delta Arundo Control and Restoration Program
September 25, 2013**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff requests board authorization for the Executive Officer to enter into an Interagency Agreement with the California Department of Water Resources for \$1,000,000 (pending final approval by the Director of DWR) in support of the first phase of the Delta Arundo Control and Restoration Program. Staff also requests board authorization for the Executive Officer to enter into a contract with the Solano Resource Conservation District and Sonoma Ecology Center, partners in the first phase of this program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Conservancy proposes to develop a Delta Arundo Control and Restoration Program, which will encompass the entire legal Delta. This program will be implemented in phases over the long-term. The first phase of the program includes mapping and prioritization of Arundo eradication sites, coordinating with other Arundo control efforts in the Delta, and implementing the Cache Slough Complex Pilot Project. The Cache Slough Complex Pilot Project seeks to control Arundo on 90,000 linear feet of waterways in the Cache Slough Complex, which totals approximately 50 acres, and restores an equivalent 50 acres of native, riparian habitat where feasible within Arundo eradication sites and/or in identified priority restoration opportunity areas.

BACKGROUND

Arundo donax (Arundo) is an invasive species introduced to California two to three centuries ago for a variety of uses. It has become widespread in California and is devastating to native species. Arundo out-competes native riparian plant species, consumes much more water than native vegetation, does not provide nesting or foraging habitat needed for animal species, increases bank erosion during flood events and increases fire severity.

Hundreds of eradication projects of all sizes need to be carried out throughout the legal Delta. Centralized coordination of these projects will provide a structure for long-term control and monitoring of this invasive species, and allow for expert oversight. This approach is more efficient than funding many separate uncoordinated control efforts. It will prevent small infestations from ballooning into disasters, will consolidate

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project funding applications to reduce agency workloads, and will prioritize eradication sites to focus money where it will be most effective. Stakeholders can be trained to do their own eradication, and positioned to receive eradication funding.

This program is consistent with the Conservancy's legislative mandates and our mission to work collaboratively and in coordination with local communities to lead efforts that protect, enhance, and restore the Delta's economy, agriculture and working landscapes, and environment, for the benefit of the Delta region, its local communities, and the citizens of California.

BUDGET

The projected budget for the first phase of the program is \$2,850,807 and will span a six-year period.

The Conservancy anticipates receiving \$1,000,000 from DWR Delta Levees Program upon final approval for the first three-year increment.

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